

December 1, 2008

Frank Foote, Director
Regulations and Rulings Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
P.O. Box 14412
Washington D.C. 2004-4412

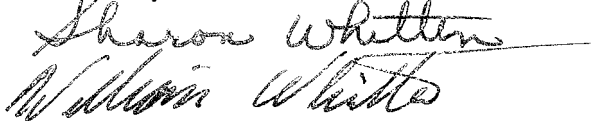
RE: Notice No. 90

Please consider this letter as our opposition to the Gallo proposal to expand the Russian River Appellation. We are residents of the Russian River Valley and not associated with the wine industry except as consumers. We do take great pride in knowing we are living in such a prestigious wine producing area and limit our wine consumption almost exclusively to Russian River wines. Our property has been family owned for over sixty years.

This is a no-brainer. We're talking about the Russian River Valley Appellation not the Russian River Watershed Appellation. To move the boundary to include the area requested by the Gallo organization would be confusing and degrading to the appellation. The Gallo wine from this area is clearly inferior and it is so very inappropriate for the Gallos to attempt their usual tactic of throwing their considerable weight around to get what they want. Please do not permit the degradation of this appellation which is known for its high quality wine to occur because money should not control everything.

One of the main contentions by the Gallo experts is that the area in question is within the Russian River Watershed. If you have enough money and want to expand I imagine that you could move northward past Ukiah and call all of that area Russian River Watershed. Are vineyard areas owned or bought in the future by the Gallos in the Healdsburg and Cloverdale areas going to be petitioned to have the same Russian River Valley appellatio in the future? Where do you stop.

Sincerely Yours

The block contains two handwritten signatures. The top signature is 'Sharon Whitten' in a cursive script. Below it is another signature, 'William Whitten', also in cursive. Both signatures are written in dark ink.

William & Sharon Whitten
8001 River Road
Forestville Ca 95436